PEARL CITY TRAFFIC CALMING CHARRETTE

HONOLULU, HAWAII

FINAL REPORT

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City and County of Honolulu
Department of Transportation Services

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This report was prepared for the Honolulu Department of Transportation Services by R. M Towill Corp. and Walkable Communities, Inc. For background information on details found in this report contact Harrison Rue, (808) 523-4643. Walkable Communities, Inc. provides a helpful website at www.walkable.org.

Disclaimer

The contents of this report represents the knowledge, experience, and expertise of the citizens and authors in providing ideas and concepts to improve safety, access, mobility and livability through traffic calming and traffic management strategies. This report does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation, and is not intended to be used as a basis for establishing civil liability. The decision to use a particular measure should be made on the basis of an engineering study of the location. This report is not a substitute for sound engineering judgement. Adherence to the princples found in this report can lead to an overall improvement in neighborhood traffic safety.

Introduction

People speed and cut through neighborhoods for a variety of reasons. Most neighborhood streets built in the past fifty years are designed for high speeds (30-40 mph) even though they may be posted at a lower limit. Meanwhile appropriate speeds for typical local streets are 25 mph. Many of our land uses are scattered. This results in families making an average of 10 car trips daily. The volume of vehicles chokes and strangles traffic flow at intersections, then backs into neighborhoods as drivers take short cuts to avoid back-ups. Many motorists are late for events and try to make up the time. We (motorists) are all guilty of these practices.

This report provides guidance on reducing this unwanted, unsafe behavior in the Mekia Street neighborhood of Waimanalo. Before entering into design of traffic calming features neighborhood residents are asked to accept that the problems most often come from inside the neighborhood. Solutions therefore must be developed by the "stakeholders"; residents and property owners, who have much to gain from working together, are the backbone of finding workable solutions.

Five Step Process

Step 1: Selection of area to be calmed

Traffic calming the Pearl City Neighborhood began with a partnership. Honolulu Department of Transportation Services staff met with Councilmember Mufi Hannemann and staff to identify an area of concern in his district, centering on the neighborhood around Kuahaka Street.

Step 2: Gather accident data in the area

R.M. Towill staff collected traffic volume, speed and crash records to determine existing conditions. University of Hawai'i Department of Urban and Regional Planning mapped traffic accident information using Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Step 3: Field audit and photograph area

The Traffic Calming Team was oriented to the neighborhood through a walking audit and site inspection. Still and digital photos were taken, a windshield audit of all principal streets in the neighborhood was conducted. The team took street width measurements, estimated block lengths, observed motorists' behaviors, interviewed pedestrians and other residents, and gathered available maps.

Step 4: Hold Charrette (community-based planning workshop)

The Pearl City Neighborhood hosted a community traffic calming charrette in April of 1998. Here neighborhood residents were presented with community photographs and given some examples of traffic calming possibilities. Then the residents created a prioritized list of the traffic issues to be addressed. Finally, the neighbors gathered

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This Pearl City Neighborhood is predominantely residential with an elementary school near the center of the community. Kuahaka Street became the focus of much of the study.

around design tables and marked suggested solutions on neighborhood maps.

Step 5: Design traffic calming devices

The Traffic Calming Team and engineers evaluate the suggestions and concerns expressed by residents during the charrette. Engineers select traffic calming devices and strategies that work most efficiently and cost effectively for the neighborhood. The Traffic Calming Team then works to create conceptual designs for specific treatments. Once a construction budget for individual devices is allocated, a local engineering firm will design detailed construction drawings for each location.

Step 6: Follow-up Workshops

The Manana Neighborhood hosted two a follow-up workshops. Residents were shown a system map and conceptual drawing for the recommended traffic calming tools. Comments were received and are incorporated into this report.